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ACTION EA 19

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

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1. UPPER HOUSE ELECTION CAMPAIGN BEGINNING TO GET UNDER WAY IN EARNEST. SAIGONSTREETS AND BUILDINGS LIBERALLY DECORATED WITH CANDIDATE POSTERS. AUG 8 TRAN VAN MUI ELECTED NEW CHAIRMAN OF UPPER HOUSE CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE, REPLACING NGUYEN TRAN, WHO RESIGNED TO CONDUCT HIS OWN CAMPAIGN. THOUGH COMMITTEE

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STILL MEETING REGULARLY IN EFFORT TO WORK OUT TRAVEL SCHEDULE AND OTHER DETAILS OF CAMPAIGN, MOST SENATORIAL CANDIDATES SEEM TO BE GOING AHEAD WITH ARRANGING OWN PROGRAMS AND SCHEDULES.
2. WHAT CAMPAIGNING IN COUNTRYSIDE INVOLVES IS ILLUSTRATED BY EXPERIENCES OF TRAN VAN LAM (LIST NO. 3), WHO VISITED GO CONG, PHONG DINH, BA XUYEN, AND BAC LIEU PROVINCES AUG 10-12. TRAVELLING BY CAR (AND ENCOUNTERING NO VC) HE SPOKE TO SCORES OF INDI-

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VIDUAL VOTERS AND SMALL GROUPS, FINDING VOTERS IN PROVINCIAL CAPITALS MUCH INTERESTED IN ELECTIONS. HE SAID ROADS IN VERY POOR CONDITION (HIS CAR BROKE DOWN IN VINH LONG AND HAD TO BE TOWED TO MY THO FOR REPAIRS), AND HE WILL SUBSEQUENTLY FLY TO OTHER PROVINCIAL ENGAGEMENTS. HE SAID IN CONTRAST TO VOTER INTEREST IN PROVINCIAL CAPITALS, VOTERS IN SMALL VILLAGES AND TOWNS LARGELY APATHETIC.
INTERESTINGLY ENOUGH, LAM SAID HE THOUGHT TRAN VAN HUONG WOULD BE VERY STRONG CANDIDATE IN PRESIDENTIAL RACE, BUT PROVINCIAL REPRESENTATIVES OF THIEU AND KY ARE QTE VERY AGRESSIVE UNQTE IN GENERAL, THOUGH APATHY EVIDENT HERE AND THERE, DEPENDING ON PERSONALITIES. LAM SAID CIVIL SERVICE, AS WHOLE, WORKING FOR THIEU AND KY, BUT BY NO MEANS IN ALL CASES. LAM ALSO SAID WHEREVER HE HAD GONE (PROVINCES LISTED ABOVE, PLUS BIEN HOA AND PHUOC TUY) POSTERS OF HA THUC KY EVERWHERE EVIDENT.

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HE FELT THIS SOMEWHAT SURPRISING, BUT IS TESTIMONY TO ACTIVITY OF DAI VIETS IN AREAS OUTSIDE THEIR NORMAL STRONGHOLDS IN NORTH CENTRAL VIET-NAM LOWLANDS.
3. LAM ALSO PROVIDED ESTIMATE OF COST OF CAMPAIGNING, HE SAID LARGE PROPORTION OF SENATE LISTS HAVE DONE LITTLE OR NO CAMPAIGNING TO DATE IN PROVINCES, CONFINING SELVES TO MODEST EFFORT IN SAIGON-CHOLON. HE SAID HIS PRINTING COSTS WELL OVER ONE MILLION PIASTRES (ESSENTIALLY CONFIRMING COMPLAINTS RE COST OF PRINTING EXPRESSED BY NGUYEN TRAN IN REFTEL). AT MINIMUM HE ESTIMATED REASONABLE EFFORT IN EACH OF 44 PROVINCES WOULD COST AVERAGE OF 50,000 PIASTRES, PLUS 500,000 PIASTRES FOR SAIGON-CHOLON AREA ALONE, THIS WOULD PUT TOTAL COST OF CAMPAIGN FOR HIS LIST AT CLOSE TO FOUR MILLION PIASTRES--ABOUT TWICE ALLOWANCE PROVIDED BY GVN.
LAM IS FAIRLY WEALTHY AND IS PROBABLY ABLE ASSUME ADDED COSTS WITHOUT SERIOUS DIFFICULTY.
4. DAO DANG VY, ALSO ON TRAN VAN LAM LIST NO. 3, PROMINENT BUDDHIST AND PROFESSOR AT VAN HANH UNIVERSITY (AND COMPILER OF PERHAPS BEST VIETNAMESE-FRENCH DICTIONARY), LEAVING FOR HUE (HIS BIRTHPLACE) AUG 14 TO ACTIVATE LIST NO. 3 CAMPAIGN THERE.
ANOTHER CANDIDATE ON LIST NO. 3, LAWYER NGUYEN VAN CHUC, TOLD

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EMBOFF LIST HAS BEEN MUCH CRITICIZED FOR ITS DIEMIST CONNECTIONS, BUT IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION HE SAID CRITICISM LARGELY IN SAIGON, THAT IN COUNTRYSIDE (HE HAS CAMPAIGNED IN HAU NGHIA PROVINCE AND ELSEWHERE) THIS NOT ISSUE. CHUC MAY BE RATHER GUNSHY, SINCE, AS LAWYER, HE HAS DEFENDED PROMINENT DIEMISTS SUCH AS DR. TRAN KIM TUYEN, NGO TRONG HIEU, AND NGUYEN VAN BUU, AND MAY HAVE BECOME SOMEWHAT NOTORIOUS FOR THIS REASON.
5. WITH THREE WEEKS OF CAMPAIGN STILL TO GO, TRAN VAN LAM STILL UNWILLING TO PREDICT OUTCOME OF EITHER SENATORIAL OR PRESIDENTIAL CONTESTS. HE CONTINUES FEEL 48 SENATE LISTS FAR TOO MANY TO MAKE PREDICTION OF RESULTS PRACTICABLE. HE ONLY GENERALLY INFORMED ABOUT QUANG TRI INCIDENT AFFECTING PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES, IN WHICH HE DISPLAYED LITTLE INTEREST.
6. WHILE LAM FAIRLY ENERGETIC AND ENTERPRISING IN CONDUCTING HIS CAMPAIGN, AT LEAST SOME OTHER SENATE SLATES LARGELY LOOD TO GOVERNMENT TO ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR TRANSPORTING CAMPAIGN MATERIALS AND CANDIDATES IN COUNTRYSIDE. DINH THACH BICH, CANDIDATE ON LIST 34 HEADED BY MAI VAN LE (WHO ASSOCIATED WITH LISTS 32 AND 33 IN ALL VIET-NAM BLOC), COMPLAINED TO SLO OFFICER AUG 10 THAT CAMPAIGNING IN

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PROVINCES, USING AUTOMOBILE, PRESENTS CERTAIN RISKS. DELEGATION TRAVELLING TO SAIGON TO ATTEND RECENT ALL VIET-NAM BLOC CONVENTION WAS FIRED ON BY VC AND DRIVER OF VEHICLE KILLED. BICH ALSO COMPLAINED THAT GVN HAS SO FAR REFUSED TO TRASPORT SENATE CANDIDATES POSTERS AND LEAFLETS TO PROVINCES.
7. COMMENT: ONE PROBLEM IN SENATE ELECTIONS IS THAT BULK OF CANDIDATES LIVE IN SAIGON OR OTHER LARGE CITIES, RARELY GO TO COUNTRYSIDE, AND SO HAVE ONLY VERY GENERAL IDEA OF SECURITY CONDITIONS. HAVING TO FACE UP TO FACT THAT VC MAKE MOVEMENT IN COUNTRY UNSAFE IS UNPLEASANT REALITY SOME CANDIDATES APPEAR RELUCTANT TO ACCEPT. LARGE NUMBER OF SENATE SLATES AND VOLUME OF PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL

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REQUIRED TO BE TRANSPORTED ALSO PRESENTS VERY DIFFICULT PROBLEM FOR GVN, WHICH LARGELY ENGAGED IN MAJOR TASK OF MOVING BALLOTS TO COUNTRYSIDE. APPEARS MANY SENATE SLATES SIMPLY DID NOT CONSIDER IN ADVANCE LOGISTICAL AND OTHER PROBLEMS THEY WOULD FACE IN CAMPAIGN, AND COMPLAINTS SUCH AS THOSE VOICED BY BICH REFLECT THIS. INTERESTING THAT TRAN VAN LAM, WHO HAD PREVIOUS CAMPAIGNING EXPERIENCE, EXPECTS LITTLE OR NO ASSISTANCE FROM GVN, REGARDING CAMPAIGN OF HIS SLATE AS HIS OWN RESPONSIBILITY. BUNKER